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Some more observations about the (DIS)Integrated Service Model....

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That you don't give a FUCK about anyway....

1. The appeal to the authority of some academic named Christine Sheppard is annoying and condescending. Do we need to be told that "tenant-facing" (what a euphemism!) staff can provide a "source of companionship" to lonely seniors? No, but I think it should be noted that most seniors don't want a lot to do with staff except – hopefully – to address a problem. I put a lot of emphasis on hope.
2. Creating a kind of localized version of the so-called "Tenant Services Coordinator" to integrate "tenant-facing" business with supports, including the new Community Services Coorinator, while assigning the paper-work to a so-called "Tenant Services Administrator" looks like potentially the kind of duplication of services – bloat – that Toronto Housing is famous for. How many coordinators do we need? Why can't "community partners" do their own coordination and outreach? One month ago our new Community Services Coordinaor offered me a bed. I still haven't received it, and I don't even want one. Even if I get it, does such activity justify an expensive new position? No. Paperwork – mainly rent reviews – could easily be simplified and done by the localized "Tenant Services Coordinator," thereby obviating the need for a designated paper-pusher at some remote Head Office site.
3. The "Model" creates a hypertrophic plethora of coordinators, but is woefully deficient on precisey what they're coordinating. It talks vaguely of LHIN – but what does this really include? No mention of the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health, for instance, which, when not out fund-raising in purple "change agent" T-shirts, conceivably has a role to play here.
4. The "Tenant Services Administrator" position, with its emphasis solely on paper-work, should be eliminated at the outset. The paper-work (routine correspondence, rent reviews, etc.) should be streamlined, reduced, and assigned to the local Service Coorinator. I think it's worth noting that the income review has already this year been simplified a lot, by being reduced to the Income Assessment from Revenue Canada.
5. The Community Services Coordinator, at least in the present configuration, does not appear to be essential. However, if the Tenant Services Coordinator were eliminated, the Community Services Coordinators could conceivaby become useful as assistants to the localized Service Coordinator. They could, for example, help elderly tenants with rent reviews and other financial business that can be daunting, like the conversion from ODSP to OAS and GIS (for one example!). Basically, the Community Services Coordinator could share duties under the supervision of the Building Services Coordinator – again, obviating the need for off-site so-called "Tenant Services Coordinator."
6. Despite the initial unhelpfulness of their Executive Director, the Toronto Hostels Training Centre offers some courses that would be helpful to staff working in a city-run seniors building. These include such topics as basic mental health training, and addressing the needs of vulnerable seniors. CAMH no doubt offers similar training.
7. In the recent past management (at least at May Robinson Apartments) has been woefully slow and obtuse about addressing illegal / prohibited activity, apartment takeovers, unsafe hoarding, elder abuse etc. Whether this will really improve any time soon looks doubtful. Staff such as and including the superintendent, a new Tenant Services Coordinator and a new Community Services Coordinator (a plethora of "coordinators" and a dearth of "coordination"), are not yet "hands-on." Merely being "in the building" – specifically in the Office, like your old-fashioned High School principal – for a few hours once a week is, of course, in terms of accountability and everything else, a joke. Managers should start by getting off their chairs, and doing rounds – like the Super, in fact, also should be doing (but isn't). Regarding hoarding, a serious fire hazard, it unfortunately has to be noted that a recent fire inspection, requiring Notices of Entry be affixed to some hundreds of doors, simply NEVER HAPPENED – without a word of explanation, with a great waste of paper and manpower and, of course, a missed opportunity to – potentially – avert a serious fire in the future. This is all too typical of Toronto Housing – bad management, bad communication, no follow-up or explanation, and WASTE – one might as well address the Kremlin with one's concerns (the OLD Kremlin, I mean).
8. Staff do not keep us up to date about projects that could potentially have important bearing on us in our building. For one example, there has been little or no informtion about the snail's progress of the new cameras, to have been installed now about a year ago, in all the common areas and stairwells. This has been a long, on-going saga – or rather a farce, of incompetence. Are the cameras finally fully-installed? And are they working? And does anyone even know how to use them? Whoever knows, isn't telling.
9. The idea of a "feedback mechanism" in the context of a Help Centre that plays musak and only follows procedures (systemic change being beyond its ken) and a Senior Tenants Advisory Committe coopted and reduced to a rubber-stamp by minder-managers like and including Reema Patel and Grant Coffey – is either the remotest possibility or the sickest joke (maybe a bit of both). They, and their "vanilla" chairman, Ms Dressler, dismiss all criticism short of a panegryic of Toronto Housing as a "gripe," and aren't the least bit interested in hearing any voice that isn't a direct echo of their own

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